

CF Adapters

At last month's meeting, Jim Lawrence made some CF adapters available to the club members. For those who haven't been keeping up, the adapter makes it possible to attach a Compact Flash memory card to an IDE chain, and use it as a hard drive. I got a few of the 44-pin version for use with 2.5 inch laptop-style drives, but other versions are also available. It's a pretty good option for some Amiga models which can use IDE hard drives, as CF cards don't take up much room, and rank much lower on power use, heat, and noise than many hard drives. I got a couple one and two gigabyte CF cards, as they were inexpensive, and more than enough for my intended uses for them. Installation is pretty straightforward, especially if you already have the necessary ribbon cables in place. A little Velcro tape to hold the adapter in place, and the hardware is ready to go. Getting the card formatted and recognized by the system was relatively painless as well. As I write this, the only system I have fully set up is my Amiga CD-32/SX-1 combo. I plan to have A600 and A1200 systems set up with CF card hard drives soon as well. I was a little surprised to find out the CD-32 is behaving better with the CF Drive than it did with a hard drive, which showed some stability issues. I was never sure what to attribute the problems to. It may have been power-related, as the CF drive (probably) draws less power than the hard drive did, and the CD-32's power supply was never really

intended to power the system expanded to this level. It might also be a drive settings issue, as I was a bit more careful with settings such as the max transfer rate when installing the CF card than I was when I installed the hard drive. Either way, I'm very pleased to see the CD-32 behaving more like a true Amiga now.

A primary reason I expanded the CD-32 into a full system was to make an "archival" system for classic Amiga demos, animations, and games. The system seemed a good choice for most of the older and not-so-old items that preferred a system without an RTG video card or a heavy-duty CPU. While the games are fun to mess with, I've been concentrating a lot on the classic animations which attracted me to the Amiga computer in the first place. Remember stores that sold Amiga systems? Remember how they had those great 3D animation loops and the like on display to show off the abilities of the machine? I sure do, and I've been searching to find many of the classic Amiga animations and demos of my youth. To that end, I've become re-acquainted with an old friend called the floppy disk. Not surprisingly, a lot of these old floppies are corrupted or outright useless, but I'm surprised how many have held up quite well. I'm also finding a lot of old pictures and other material that I haven't seen in a long time. It's not easy to find all the animations I was hoping to find however, as there are several pitfalls in the way. I'm surprised how many things I remember which seen to

have, for all practical purposes, fallen off the face of the Earth. One would think, given the resources of mountains of floppy disks, CD-ROM Collections, and the Internet, pretty much any digital file should be available somewhere, but this is not necessarily the case. Also, there are a lot of animations which require players that don't work so well after years of hardware and operating system updates. I've been updating the animations to work best with the CD-32 where I can, though some are resistant. Considering the amount of work going in, I might have a CD-ROM compilation to offer sometime in the future, in case anyone is interested in their own collection of classic Amiga animations and demos. In any case, I'll have more than a few things to show at the upcoming AmiTech meeting, all running off a CF card wired to an SX-1 plugged into a CD-32. (and a monitor). See y'all there.

...by Eric Schwartz
The AmiTech-Dayton Gazette,
September 2007

Broadband Crippled

The co-father of the TCP/IP protocol and so-called "father of the Internet" as well told a packed auditorium at the University of Buenos Aires last week that all internet links should be symmetric.

Internet pioneer Vinton G. Cerf — now turned Google's Internet Evangelist — visited the land of

Tango and gave an interesting and amusing talk about the past, present, and future of the Net. He's been doing so for quite some time, and let me tell you that he's really good at it. One of Cerf's points was that one of the pros of the widespread adoption of the Net was the democratisation of access to information and that people are increasingly becoming content producers, sending information back to the Web and not just being 'passive consumers' of pre-packaged bits. He mentioned the Wikipedia and people who upload their own creations to Youtube as examples of that shift.

So, when it was time for questions from the audience, this correspondent Inquired: "with regards to your point about users becoming content creators, don't you think that it's very important that the broadband providers,

the ISPs, provide symmetric connections, so that the upload (upstream) speed matches the download speed?"

He surely got the point and to my surprise, agreed very emphatically. "Absolutely", he said, describing the lack of symmetric bandwidth as one of the current problems of the Net: "currently, the residential customers are the handicapped of the Net" said Cerf, adding that because of that, users who want symmetric internet links often have to purchase an expensive "business grade" internet connection, finally pointing out that symmetric internet connections are essential for the new wave of applications on the network, like video conferencing, running your own servers, TV time-shifting and place-shifting devices, and the like.

AmigaMCCC News

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October Calendar

October 10 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:00 pm — **South** Grand Prairie Public Library
760 Bardin Road, Grand Prairie
**Note: Wednesday meeting at
South GP Library**

October 10 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 9:15 pm — Location TBD

October 27 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

Cerf's call for symmetric bandwidth is specially important because it was made in a country like Argentina where upstream speeds for residential broadband border the ridiculous, often in the 128K to 256K range — even for 5Mbit downstream links — a 20 to one ratio. So this scribbler obviously sympathised with Cerf's claims. But what can be done about it? Cerf has a notion. In an earlier part of his talk, he gave his own personal approach for fighting the current state of affairs: "public embarrassment is my approach," he said, and by that he referred to doing and publishing comparisons of how expensive, slow, or both, internet access is in the US compared to some of the World leaders in the area like Japan or Korea.

...By Fernando Cassia in Argentina